

Le Bel Homme

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/3804766) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/3804766>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warnings:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence , Rape/Non-Con
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter , Alana Bloom/Bedelia Du Maurier
Characters:	Will Graham , Hannibal Lecter , Beverly Katz , Bedelia Du Maurier , Alana Bloom , Jimmy Price , Brian Zeller , Dr. Frederick Chilton
Additional Tags:	Minor Character Death , Rape/Non-con Elements , Dubious Consent , Gore , Bondage , Ghosts , this is a goddamn slasher movie , except it's a fic , not a movie , guys Will is pretty into the ghost sex thing
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Carrion Comforts
Stats:	Published: 2015-04-23 Words: 8,156 Chapters: 1/1

Le Bel Homme

by [Cadaverish](#)

Summary

Beverly Katz convinces Will and their passel of drunken friends to break into the abandoned house of the famed Chesapeake Ripper, who died years ago without ever being caught.

Only something strange is going on in the house and by the time Will figures out what, it may be too late...

Notes

My friends please take care of yourselves. If ghost stories keep you up at night, go read something else okay I promise I won't mind. If you're gonna get triggered by a character finding himself tied up and subjected to some really, really, really dubiously consensual sex, please please hit the back button. I love you all and I want you to be happy.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Will Graham had spent a great deal of his life in the company of alcohol.

Some of his earliest memories were his father slipping him watery beer at boatyard barbeques. Then, in highschool, the sharp stink of vodka became a constant companion, clinging to his pillowcases, the thighs of his jeans, the rim of his water bottle. Looking back, Will couldn't say he was particularly proud of that particular coping mechanism for his empathy, but it had sure made his head shut up for a while.

Now, sitting in the bed of Beverly Katz' pickup truck and staring at the array of liquor bottles arranged by the campfire, Will felt a little bit outclassed. Beverly had bodily loaded him into her truck as soon as class had let out that afternoon and they had gone straight to the liquor store some clever capitalist had opened immediately beyond the campus limits. "We're having a 'Fuck Rush Day' party," Beverly told him, her arms laden with an unholy quantity of bargain liquor. "We are?"

"Yeah, tomorrow's Rush Day." She told him, well aware that Will did everything in his power to remain oblivious of the general social calendar both on and off campus. "God," Will sighed heavily, "fuck that."

"Right? So we're spending it drunk," Beverly told him heaving the liquor into the bed of her truck and slamming the tail gate.

"We," Will asked, slouching down in the passenger seat.

"You, me, Bedelia, Alana, Fred, Price, Zeller," she paused, ticking the names of their very strange and frequently inebriated social group, "God willing Franklyn and Toby won't figure out where we're meeting up but they probably will," she made a retching noise, "Jack and Bella will probably be too busy being attractive and successful, but they might swing by who knows."

"No Freddie?" Will pulled his belt knife and started cleaning out the dirt from under this fingernails.

"Oh, no, didn't you hear? Of course you didn't hear, what am I saying. Will, Fred and Freddie broke up."

"He finally heard about Wendy, huh,"

"We all told him about Wendy, story goes he finally saw them"

"Gross."

"Right? Anyway Fred Squared is no more and we'll likely be hearing all about that this weekend," she huffed a cynical laugh.

Will grunted resignedly and looked up from his nails, "where are we even going?"

"Bloody Bend, where else" Beverly answered drumming her thumbs on the steering wheel.

“Very mainstream,” Will told her, folding his knife back up and returning it to his jacket pocket.

“Yeah, well, can’t argue with the view,” she flashed him a grin and Will offered his own version of a smile before turning the radio on and singing badly for the rest of the drive.

Bloody Bend was an infrequently traveled section of road on a hill above the town, full of hair pin turns in poor repair and, relevant to Will and company, a number of turn offs with good views of the city below. Legend had it the road was haunted and the pubs around campus hosted a reliable business exchanging drinks for stories of women in white dresses who came and went mysteriously. For all the stories though, Will, Beverly, and their friends of dubious decision making ability had never once had supernatural experience in their years of partying up on the hill.

Beverly’s truck lumbered into the gravel pull-off and Beverly threw it into park and shut off the engine. Will kicked open the passenger door and set to work assembling the campfire while Beverly started figuring out the tent. Freshman year, when Will and Beverly had found this place with Alana, they had all pitched in for a stupidly large tent and a collection of air mattresses. As their passel of friends grew, nobody had ever bothered to buy additional tents and everyone had simply resigned themselves to sleeping in warm piles on whatever mattresses hadn’t been punctured. There was firm rule against make outs in the pile, of which Fred Squared had been a frequent offender. Will was looking forward to a night without their shenanigans.

“When we graduate,” Will said as he fiddled with the fire pit, “we should rent a boat. We could dick around the gulf.”

“I’m game,” Will looked up when it wasn’t Beverly’s voice that responded but Alana’s smoky mezzo-soprano. Her father had given her a prius for her birthday last year and Will had lamented the lack of warning ever since. “I’ve never been on a boat,” Alana added, squatting on the heels of her boots and prodding Will’s little triangle of firewood until it settled into a better shape. “Never?” Beverly asked, her voice muffled by the crinkle of tent fabric.

“Never,”

“Well it’s settled then, Will you have to take us on a grand tour,” Beverly proclaimed, emerging from the tent triumphantly.

“Just not a three hour tour,” Will muttered under his breath.

Will got the fire going, but with the sun still up it was a little too warm to be sitting around it so they elected to fill up the air mattresses. Just as they were finishing up and the sun was well on its way to being down, the crunch of gravel and throb of a bass line heralded the arrival of Zeller and Price. Nobody had ever called them by their first names, Will wasn’t even sure he knew their first names, but the important thing was that Price drove an old VW van which could fit a spectacular amount of food, ice, and still more alcohol. They had barely finished unloading these contributions when then heard Bedelia’s Harley roaring up on the road, and then Fred Chilton in his ancient and poorly restored Corvette. “It’s a classic,” he told them frequently, and someone inevitably answered that it was “a classic horror show”.

“Fred, what the fuck?” Beverly shouted and Will looked up from where he’d been avoiding eyecontact and got a face full of Fred Chilton in neon running shorts. “What,” Fred asked,

posing to show off his pale thighs and dark leg hair to their fullest effect, “not like I have a girlfriend to impress anymore.” He plopped down beside the campfire and raked a hand through his hair in a way that was probably supposed to make him more sympathetic.

“Beverly you know I’d never ask you this in any but the most dire of circumstances” Price began

“No.” Beverly cut that line of joking off quickly, firmly, and mercilessly.

Food was consumed, shit was shot, and the night settled into the old familiar drinking games. Will lay on his back in the grass, feeling the heat of rum buzzing through his chest, listening to the chatter on all sides. “Oh,” Fred said with all the inappropriate volume control of the well and truly hammered, “oh, you guys, I learned something today”

“Very good, Fred,” Bedelia drawled, coolly and there was a chorus of laughter.

“No, but, okay.” Fred pinched the bridge of his nose, trying to summon the words from the beyond the whiskey haze. His neon shorts seemed to glow in the firelight. “I learned,” he held up a finger to show that he was well and truly committed to the English language, “that there was a cannibal,” and here he wheeled and pointed into the infinite dark beyond the ring of firelight “down there.”

“What? When, just now? Are we gonna be barbe-killed?” Zeller crowed.

“No,” Fred said, hiccupped, and started again, “no like an ‘undred years ago. Or fifty. Or a hundred an’ fifty.”

“Good, much clearer,” Zeller teased. Price tossed a marshmallow from the bag in his lap, and Zeller obligingly caught it in his mouth.

“No, but, he lived like right down there!” Fred protested, becoming distressed that the group was not floored by this new discovery.

“Oh, do you mean the Chesapeake Ripper?” Alana perked up, liberating her focus from Bedelia and returning it to the conversation. “The who now?” Price asked, now tossing a marshmallow into his own mouth.

“I thought he was a ghost story,” Bedelia’s dark lipstick made her mouth plump in the glittering firelight, “was he real?”

“Yes,” Alana had settled into story telling mode, smoothing her long skirt over her knees and crossing her boots at the ankle, “he killed an awful lot of people and if the cannibal theory is true,” Fred squawked at her doubt but Bedelia silenced him with an upheld hand and a dark look, “if the theory is true,” Alana pressed on, herself lightly flushed with drink, “then he’s probably killed many more than we know about.”

“But, he’s dead right?” Zeller asked, eyes wide and voice wavering a lot higher than he’d ever admit. “Yeah,” Alana agreed taking another sip of her drink, “he died in the fifties.”

“They never did catch him,” Will offered from his place in the grass, “only found out about him after he died and the bank came for the house.”

“You know about him too, Will?” Alana asked, brushing aside the dark curtain of her hair to

look at him more directly. “Yeah,” Will murmured, too drunk to speak loudly, “we went over him in my criminal justice classes. He’s kind of a quintessential ‘one who got away’.”

“Only you could use ‘quintessential’ when you can’t even stand,” Zeller cackled.

“I can stand,” Will objected though he still felt as if he were speaking through a veil, “look,” and he wobbled to his feet and raised his hands triumphantly. This display was followed by everyone else getting to their feet and demonstrating their control over their motor skills, with varying degrees of success.

“Do you guys want to go look for his house?” Beverly asked suddenly.

“What?” Price asked as Zeller asked “whose house?”

“The Chesapeake Ripper’s house,” Beverly answered patiently, clearly much more sober than she’d been letting on.

“I bet it’s creepy,” she said, wagging her eyebrows at Bedelia, knowing that Bedelia couldn’t resist that and neither could Alana by extension.

“Isn’t this how horror movies start,” Price speculated, tone dubious.

“Scared, Price?” Bedelia asked him, already starting for the narrow deer path that wound down the hill.

Price answered with an incomprehensible stream of indignant syllables that never quite made it into words.

Will found himself at Beverly’s side, and Fred brought up the rear because if everyone else was going he was going too.

After a moment of cursing and fumbling in the dark, the party trooped back up the hill and retrieved such flashlights as could be found, and, of course, alcohol because Beverly had told them that “damn right we’re playing Never Have I Ever in the Chesapeake Ripper’s living room”

“Is there anything left we don’t know?” Will asked with more or less serious concern, but he went entirely ignored.

Back down the hill they went. With flashlights on, the deer path unraveled much more clearly down the hill. “Why is this still here?” Price wondered, smacking a tree branch that had wandered into his face. “Ripper’s looking for that one last victim,” Beverly called back and Bedelia, Price and Zeller all cackled.

“His profile was across the board,” Will offered, “no preferences in gender or race.”

“What about age though,” Zeller asked above the crunch of dry leaves underfoot, “you’d think if he was a cannibal, he wouldn’t want old folks, right,” he paused, shuffling awkwardly past an uneven section of ground, “he’d want them young and strong.”

“Mm that’s my type too,” Price drawled with a leer, “young and strong” and this he punctuated by smacking Zeller on the ass, who in turn barked out a protesting laugh. “Quit it, heterosexual life mates,” Bedelia snapped without any real anger, “sure thing, homosexual life mates,” Zeller shot back. Alana flipped her middle finger at him.

“How’d he kill them?” Alana, this time.

“The bodies they found,” Will answered, keeping close behind her and Bedelia and

consequently the best flashlights in the group, “mostly had their necks snapped. Stabbing or two.”

“One stabbing,” Zeller started with a truly atrocious Count imitation “ah, ah, ah,”

“Two stabbing,” Price continued, equally poorly, “ah, ah, ah”

“Three stabbing” Beverly howled, with no attempt made at the accent, “ah ah ah!”

“Shut up,” Bedelia hissed, stopping abruptly and throwing out an arm to keep Alana from walking past her.

Peering over her shoulder, Will could see a large house rising out of the blackness before them. Clearly, it had once been magnificent, but it had fallen into severe disrepair after so long alone. Shingles hung slantwise from the pockmarked roof, the porch that wrapped around the house sagged in places and the steps up to the door given up entirely, collapsing inward on themselves. A gust of wind whistled by Will’s ear and a dangling shutter slammed against the siding with a bang that made them all jump.

“Well it’s definitely creepy,” Bedelia conceded, panning her flashlight over the yawning window frames. “Remind me why we’re doing this?” Fred whined, shivering in his neon shorts. “Because it’s fucking awesome.” Beverly declared and strode purposefully across the lawn. She paused by the door, the wood warped ominously long since bowed away from latch and lock, “last one in is sloppy joes!”

“Hell no,” Price shouted, breaking into an ungainly sprint, “I’m a prime rib at least!” Zeller pelted after him, leaving Will, Alana, Fred, and Bedelia to walk more sedately across the cooling grass. The wind kicked up again and Will shuddered, peering up at the half moon. Something caught the corner of his eyes, and he stopped to look more directly at a second story window with a pane of glass still in its moorings. Nothing. Empty glass stared back at him.

“Will, you’re sloppy joes!” Beverly informed him, leaning out of one of the empty window frames on the ground floor. “At least I’m made with vodka sauce,” Will replied, not bothering with the door and stepping through the window.

The room they found themselves in was mostly square. Tall windows dominated the wall to their left, mostly bare now and bordered by curtains that might once have been striped. Two chairs, one overturned, and heavy wooden desk were all that remained for furniture, but moldering books dotted the shelves. “Look, a fireplace,” Fred observed pointedly with a hopeful tint to his tone.

“God knows what the chimney’s like,” Will groused, flopping into the upright chair. He tipped his head back and looked at the squares of plaster that checkered the ceiling. “I feel like a patient,” he told nobody in particular, “in a doctor’s office.” The wind whistled through the big picture windows and the back of his neck prickled with the chill of it. “Really?” Beverly asked from where she sat cross-legged on the desk, “I feel like a monk. Like I should be transcribing bibles in here or something.”

“What’s the rest of the house like?” Price asked. Beverly hopped off the desk and the pack of them trooped out of the room, laughing and ribbing each other. Will produced a flask of

whiskey from his jacket and sipped from it. Impulsively, he rose and strode to the bookshelves. "Lot of psychology," he observed aloud, "were you a doctor for real?"

His textbooks never said anything about that.

"They only ever said you were a socialite, very popular in the community." Will realized abruptly that he was talking with a dead cannibal and his mouth clicked shut. "Planning a thesis, Will?" Bedelia spoke from the doorway, leaning against the frame with her arms folded over her chest.

"Shit, Bedelia," Will said dropping the book in his hand onto the floor. "Sorry," he told the empty room compulsively. "Sorry?" Bedelia asked him, uncrossing her arms and tugging the hem of her leather jacket down to her hips. "I uh," Will bent, picking up the book from the ground, "I just wouldn't want people dropping my books." He flushed, thankfully invisible in the dark.

"You feel it too, then," Bedelia asked him, stroking the spine of a nearby book, "there's a presence here."

"Oh, uh," Will's hands shook as anxiety washed over him, caught muttering to himself in an empty room to a dead man, "I don't know about that. I just," he fumbled with his flask, "I like books."

Bedelia smiled at him, obvious thanks to her dark lipstick even in the gloom. "Come look at the bedroom," she held out her hand implacably and Will gave her the flask. She took a sip, gave it back, and strode from the room. Will followed obediently. He'd always appreciated Bedelia's implacable, stoic calm. They often shared a table in the cavernous campus library, hardly ever actually studying so much as taking shelter from their classmates.

Bedelia led him up a broad staircase that tapered in from a wide base in the foyer to the carpeted hallway on the second floor. Up here, the air was more claustrophobic, fewer windows were missing and more walls separated the rooms. Will heard Price's laughter as they approached. A heavy oak door, still firmly attached to its hinges, lead to a large bedroom dominated by a four-poster bed. Opposite the bed was a massive fireplace and Will was near certain that looming in the far corner was a genuine suit of samurai armor.

Price lay supine on the bed, legs spread wide and Zeller stood between them, holding an old novel in his hands from which he had apparently been reading aloud.

"What?" Will asked faintly, feeling a creeping sense of wrongness in his spine.

"The Ripper was a flaming homo, dude!" Price chirped from where he lay on the bed.

"Owning Leaves of Grass doesn't mean-" Bedelia started testily, "you should see what was under Leaves of Grass," Price said suggestively, rolling his hips.

Will heard Beverly's steps behind him and she watched the antics with the expression of an exasperated parent.

“Smells like mold and old,” Price complained, tipping his head sideways on the coverlet. “Yeah, I wonder why,” Zeller drawled sarcastically, tossed Leaves of Grass on to Price’s stomach with a soft puff of air, and wandered over to the mantelpiece. Price kicked himself upright and tossed the book back onto the bed carelessly. Will winced, but couldn’t have explained why if anyone had asked him.

“Why is all this stuff still here,” Beverly sounded half indignant as she shouldered by Will and strode across the room to admire the samurai armor more closely. Will felt a frisson of dread travel down his spine. “Don’t touch that,” Bedelia exclaimed, also shouldering by Will and quickly moving to Beverly. “I wouldn’t, geez,” Beverly pouted, “what’s got into you two?”

Price flapped his hands, looking exasperated, and before anyone could stop him, he ducked around Beverly and picked up the katana that lay at the armor’s feet. “Like it’s even real,” Price said, pulling the blade from the sheath. Bedelia watched him, expression tight “it looks real enough to me,” her tone was chastising.

“Yeah there was a huge Asian craze in the 50s, all sorts of this knock-off bullshit-“ however he was going to end that sentence Will never got to find out. He had unconsciously backed away from the doorway when Price had drawn the blade, which was a lucky thing because although nobody was touching it, the door abruptly slammed shut with such force the air whistled in Will’s ears.

The other side of the door erupted into shouts and somebody pounded on the door in front of Will. Will braced his feet and tugged on the door, yelling back, but for all the house’s disrepair, the door held fast and the knob didn’t budge.

Will leaned against the door, palms braced against the dark wood “guys,” he called through the gap between the door and its frame, “I’m going to go look for a key, sit tight okay?” Zeller yelled something unhelpful in response but Bedelia’s voice, barely modulated with stress, called to him “try the kitchen, Will”.

Will called back an acknowledgement and trotted away, taking the stairs two at a time. His nerves felt as if they had been ignited, his hands tingled and his stomach was tight and tense. He rounded the corner of the stairs and passed through a long, dark dining room. The smell of soil was thick in the gloom, Will couldn’t shake the feeling that he was being watched.

On the other side of the dining room, kitty corner to the living room they had first entered the house through, was an opulent kitchen. The appliances looked dated and clunky to Will’s modern eyes, but he could tell that in the Ripper’s heyday it would have been top of the line. A center island held a large butcher’s block and protruding from the dense wood was a chef’s knife, the blade not embedded in the wood glinted in the spare moonlight filtering through the windows.

Will realized he was standing still, staring at the knife, suddenly and jerked himself back into movement. Scanning the kitchen for likely places to find keys, he thought about the cluttered apartment he shared with Alana and Beverly, how odds and ends accumulated in the drawer closest to their front door. Will moved to the counter and tried the drawer. Nothing.

Spinning on his heel to survey the room again, his eyes met with the pantry. He couldn't remember the doors being open when he came into the room, in fact he would swear they had been closed. Will fished his cellphone from his pocket and pulled up the flashlight function. Pale blueish light flooded the pantry. At the far end a narrow door, barely wide enough for Will to edge through sideways, gaped.

Will remembered the short entry in his textbook on the Ripper, one sentence burning in his mind "an appraiser discovered a secret room below the house where he had stored the bodies of his victims".

"What the fuck," Will muttered to nobody but the empty kitchen, holding his phone over his head, "what the fuck, what the fuck". A gust of air whistled through a crack in the window and tousled the curls at the back of Will's head.

He started forward, intensely conscious of the process of putting one foot in front of the other, the hand wrapped around his phone was shaking hard. Will took a huge breath into his lungs and tried to calm down, edging through the pantry and into the space beyond.

Will's phone illuminated a narrow stairwell that turned four steps down and descended at a right angle beyond his vision.

"Will?"

Beverly's voice boomed like a canon in Will's head and he startled badly, his phone dropped from his hands and skipped down the stairs to the landing below. "Fuck," he swore, slouching and bracing his hands on his knees.

"The door opened," Beverly told him and though her tone was light, she made no move to join him in the stairwell. "What, just opened," Will asked, coming back to himself. Why had he been going into the basement anyway, he'd been looking for a key, hadn't he?

"Yeah. Just opened. Bedelia got tired of waiting for you and tried the knob one more time and it opened like nothing had ever happened."

"What do you mean she got tired of waiting for me, it's been less than five minutes," Will grouched testily. With Beverly there, his nerves weren't so badly shaken and he eased himself down the last few steps to pick up his phone from the landing.

"Try twenty," Beverly said, brows narrowing, "Will are you feeling okay?" She shone her flashlight down at him, blinding him briefly. "Jesus ow, yeah, you just startled me," Will groaned, rubbing his eyes and waiting for the retinal burn to fade.

"Yeah, sorry, but your pale as a sheet, Will, what the fuck, you're covered in sweat!" Beverly trotted down the stairs and put the back of her hand to Will's forehead. Will jerked away from her and leaned against the wall, "I'm fine."

"Sure, whatever." She said. "What even is this place?"

“I think,” Will said, scrubbing his sweaty palms on the thighs of his jeans and looking down into the impenetrable black, “I remember his kill room was in the basement.” As he spoke, a chill moved through him. He shivered.

“Oh, weird,” Beverly muttered, her tone translated her fear almost into aggression. Footsteps clattered on the kitchen tile and Price and Zeller appeared in the doorway to the pantry. Will noticed abruptly that Zeller was bare-chested under his hoodie and his red t-shirt had been wrapped around Price’s hand. “What happened to you?”

“Dropped the sword,” Price sounded chagrined, “when the door closed.”

“Guess it was real,” Will remarked. He felt vindicated.

“Have you guys seen Fred?” Zeller asked, peering into the stairwell. Beverly had lowered her flashlight and only her and Will’s boots on the rough wood were visible.

As Zeller said Fred’s name, Will felt unaccountably terrified. He felt nauseous, and cold, and he slumped over, hands braced on his knees breathing hard. “Will!” Beverly exclaimed, crouching to try to look him in the eye.

Will broke away from her and blindly half-walked, half stumbled down the rest of the stair into the basement. It made no sense for Will to be able to feel the chill of the concrete floor through the soles of his boots, but his feet were cold and he fumbled for the phone in his pocket.

Beverly, Price, and Zeller all bounced off one another as they clattered into the basement behind him. Will held up his phone at the same time that Beverly slid the beam of her flashlight over the table in the middle of the room.

It was steel, and had been coated in some kind of paint which was now chipping badly after so long in the damp basement. Beside the table was a rolling cart laden with arcane medical instruments. Below the table, a bucket left to collect the run off was tipped onto its side. Drops from the table hit the side of the bucket with soft plinks. On the table lay Fred Chilton.

He was too still, and too pale, and Will knew instantly that he was dead.

“Oh my god,” somebody behind him said. Beverly moved to the body, pressing her fingers up under Fred’s jaw to feel for a pulse. Looking around her in the pale light of his phone, Will could see the neon running shorts had gone black with blood.

Abruptly, Beverly turned away from Fred and puked, her shoulders heaving and back hunched. Will felt his stomach turn over in sympathy, but he slapped a hand to his mouth and breathed the smell of his own skin until he felt better. Frantically, Will’s eyes moved over the rest of the room. A band-saw was perched against one wall, empty refrigerators stood open against another. A man stood in the far corner.

Will’s breath stoppered his throat closed and he tried to focus his eyes desperately, his free hand compulsively felt for the folding knife in his pocket.

The man in the corner resolved into a dark tarp on a hook. There was no man, they were alone with the body of Fred Chilton. Will breathed out through pursed lips.

“We gotta call the cops,” Price said dully, producing his own phone.

“Figures, no signal.” He said a moment later.

“Me either,” Zeller agreed beside him.

“Who killed him,” Beverly asked, her tone was dull and she was scrubbing her mouth against the sleeve of her shirt. “Oh fuck,” Price said, aghast as he realized what she was implying, “we’re not alone.”

Of course not, we broke into somebody’s house, Will thought as if from far away.

“Shit, okay,” Zeller said, turning on his phone’s flashlight and whipping around, checking all sides of the room and feeling satisfied they were empty. “There’s a door by the kitchen,” his voice was fearful, but had steadied with confidence. “We’ll just walk up the stairs, leave, and we’ll have signal when we get outside.”

“What about Bedelia and Alana?” Price asked, wide eyed. “Fuck,” Zeller swore, the muscle in his jaw jumped. “I’ll go get them,” Will found himself saying, moving for the stairs, “we can meet you outside.”

Beverly grabbed the sleeve of his jacket, pulling him back to her, “are you insane? We have to stay together!”

“Fuck that,” Price said, “let’s get out and send the cops back for them.”

“They might be outside already,” Zeller agreed. Nobody was looking back at Fred. Upstairs, somebody screamed.

Will bolted for the stairs and he heard Beverly, Price and Zeller scramble after him. “Bedelia? Alana?” he called from the kitchen, his voice sounded weak to his own ears. “Upstairs!” came Alana’s voice faintly. Will took the corner to the dining room hard and felt his t-shirt tear on something and a drop of blood slide down his arm but he didn’t slow.

Alana was at the top of the stairs, her complexion chalky. “The bookcase,” she said faintly, and they trooped into the bedroom. A tall bookshelf that had stood by the door was toppled over. Will could just see the silvery gleam of Bedelia’s hair trailing out from beneath the wood.

“Oh my god,” Beverly breathed, and started sobbing, clutching her own arms, flashlight uselessly illuminating the ceiling above them.

“I’m alright,” Bedelia called, voice tense, “but I can’t move this,” she grunted, “bookshelf!” Will went to the bookshelf immediately and Zeller followed him. They counted from three and heaved the bookshelf onto its side and it rolled over fully, and hit the ground with the loud thud. Bedelia screamed.

“Oh shit,” Zeller breathed, “shit I’m so sorry,” Will looked at Bedelia and found that the lower part of her right leg had borne the brunt of the bookshelf. Blood oozed from the wood of the bookshelf. “Fuck,” Will muttered desperately, squatting to lift the shelf, swearing all the while. Bracing himself, he hauled backwards and the bookshelf lifted a scant few inches, but it was enough. Price and Zeller grabbed Bedelia by the shoulders and dragged her backwards out from the bookcase. Her leg was bent the wrong way and her pant leg gleamed wetly.

“That’s, um,” Zeller stopped, took a deep breath, swallowed audibly and continued, “that’s a compound fracture. We uh,” he swallowed again, “we can’t splint that; she needs to get to a hospital.”

“I still don’t have signal,” Beverly said, voice shaky. “Me either,” they all chorused one by one.

“We can’t move her like this,” Zeller gulped, “somebody needs to call the cops and an ambulance.”

“You go,” Bedelia told him, voice somehow resolutely calm despite her leg, “take Beverly and go.”

“Shouldn’t we be leaving the EMT here?” Price asked dryly, “Zeller can tell them what happened,” Bedelia said, “and you know how to use that sword unless you’ve suddenly forgotten all your kendo.”

“She’s right,” Will said, chewing on the skin around his thumbnail, “Zeller and Beverly should go. Me, Alana, and Price will wait here with Bedelia.”

They looked at each other in silence, and Zeller left without another word, Beverly on his heels.

“Well,” said Price. He stood and checked his phone another time, found he still had no signal, and moved to the armor, picking up the katana. His hand was made bulky by the t-shirt binding it, but he held the blade confidently, now that he knew it was real.

Alana was bent over Bedelia and they were murmuring something. Will did his best not to hear anything, it sounded private. Standing up and giving Price a wide berth, he moved to the bed. The yellowed copy of *Leaves of Grass* lay where Price had thrown it earlier.

Will opened it gently, trying not pull any of the flimsy pages from the drying glue in the spine and sat on the bed to read.

Alana and Bedelia must’ve agreed because Alana rose and walked to the large closet in the corner behind the fallen bookshelf. Only one of the doors could open with the bookcase where it lay, and she squeezed into the space beyond holding Bedelia’s Maglite in front of her. Price kept moving through his routine, but he was obviously watching the closet.

Alana emerged unharmed and Will glanced back at Price with a sympathetic smile of shared panic. In the ornate mirror facing the bed, behind Price, Will saw a man. His scream stuck in his throat, but he clutched at the bedclothes.

The man was tall and broad shouldered, tawny skinned and looked like he might be edging on fifty. He met Will's eyes and put a single finger to his lips with a smile. Will's mouth flapped open and shut uselessly.

"Doin' okay there, Will?" Price held the katana loosely at his side and was smirking sardonically. "Just realized you looked like that, huh?" Price said turning to look in the mirror. The man had vanished. "Don't worry, we'll love you anyway."

Will swallowed hard and turned to look at Alana. She had found a silver and red tie in the closet and what wrapping it around Bedelia's leg in a tourniquet. Seeing him looking, Alana called him over to hold a light for her.

Alana tightened the knot on Bedelia's leg until the ooze of blood from her pant legs stopped entirely. By the light of his phone, Will saw the white glint of bone faintly through the torn pant leg.

Behind them, they heard a sound like metal on stone, and then heard a faint gurgle. Will rose, turned, and saw Price collapse, holding his throat. He ran to Price, skidding on his knees and turned him over. Blood shot into Will's face, splattering over him hot and sticky. He tried to stop the flow of blood but Price just kept gasping, blood kept spilling. Will felt the pulse under his hands go still.

The katana lay, some yards away, glinting in the moonlight, utterly pristine.

"Price," Will said thickly, numb with shock, "Price is dead," and he turned to look at Bedelia and Alana.

"We're getting out of here," Bedelia said decisively. "Grab the sword, Will."

"Fuck no," Will replied just as firmly, but he did pick up a decorative piece from the mantle, a stone carved from sleek stone, and through it at the mirror. It shattered, glass spraying across the floor.

"What the fuck, Will!" Alana exclaimed.

"Ghosts live in mirrors, sometimes," Bedelia told her, solemnly, "good thinking, Will."

Bedelia managed to get her good leg beneath her and, panting, pushed herself into Alana's arms. Will returned to them and got one of Bedelia's arms over his shoulder, and Alana wrapped the other around hers. Bedelia and Alana were both shorter than Will so he stooped over, trying to share the weight but shouldering most of it anyway. They paused in the doorway, and Alana passed the Maglite to Bedelia and Bedelia clenched it in the fist over Alana's shoulder, her other hand was wrapped up in Will's t-shirt, clutching hard.

Together like an ungainly five-legged race participant, they staggered down the hall, making for the stairs. They paused to wheel around and take the stairs going sideways, when Bedelia went stiff.

"Did you hear that?" she whispered in Will's ear.

“What-“ he started, but then he heard it too. Footsteps on the tile downstairs. “Hello?” he called and Bedelia jerked next to him. “What,” he whispered to her, “either it’s a,” he paused unable to believe he was seriously considering the option, “either it’s a ghost and he knows where we are anyway, or it’s the EMTs and they have fucking police backup!”

Nobody responded from downstairs, and Bedelia’s flashlight illuminated only broken tile. “Wait here,” Will said, and pulled out his phone. Bedelia lowered herself onto the top step and Alana sat just behind her, watching over her shoulder with wide, dark eyes.

Will was edging down the stairs one at a time, as quietly as he knew how, when something beneath him gave out and he fell.

He landed with a thump that pushed all the air from his lungs. He didn’t know where his phone had gone, but he smelled concrete and blood. He must have fallen into the basement. Will gasped for air, trying to find purchase with his fingers to drag himself along the concrete floor.

Somebody with large, warm hands picked up his hand and Will thought he felt the press of lips against his knuckles. He tried to breath again. Somebody let his hand go, and Will felt the warm hand around his throat, squeezing. Spots sparked in front of his eyes and he gave in, the spiraling dark rushing up to swallow him whole.

Will woke on the bed. Leaves of Grass had been closed and neatly bookmarked, and now lay on the bedside table. Looking down his body, Will could see the mirror was as broken as it had ever been, now just a gray patch of wall with a gilt frame around it. Will felt for his phone, but realized that his hands had been bound over his head, wrapped in something soft and secured to the headboard.

He felt a warm touch on his stomach, as if a hand were sliding over the skin and edging up under his shirt. He could see nobody, but his shirt was sliding slowly up his body. “Uh,” he said intelligently, his ribs were still sore and aching from his fall. How long ago had he fallen, were Bedelia and Alana still at the top of the stairs? Will drew breath to call out, but the door slammed for the second time that night, hard enough to rattle the windows. Will felt a hand on his jaw and his face was jerked sideways. Above him, he saw the canopy of the four-poster, and absolutely no body to whom the hands might belong.

“Please,” Will wheezed, “we’re sorry we broke in,” he licked his lips. “We just wanted to see,” he trailed off, uncertain how that was supposed to explain away their actions. He felt cold air over his neck, and then the press of petal-soft lips. The lips trailed up, and Will felt his jaw being nudged up, baring his throat. The lips felt for the hinge of his jaw, kissing softly at the fine skin behind his earlobe, and then he felt the pinch of teeth, the hard pressure of a bite. Will gasped aloud, convulsing against his bonds.

Cold air froze the bitten skin and Will felt a heavy weight settle over his chest. “Please,” Will said again, twisting his hips wildly, but no longer certain what he was asking for. Turning his head over to the dark windows, Will saw the form of a man bent over him reflected in the glass. It was the same man from the mirror and when his sandy hair flopped over his forehead, Will swore he felt it against the bared skin of his chest.

The flashlight on his phone went out as the battery died, and the reflection vanished from view. In the dark, Will felt hot hands under his shirt, sliding over his ribs and down his sides. "You're Doctor Lecter, aren't you?" he asked the empty room. The hands froze on his hips. "You're the Chesapeake Ripper." Will felt the mouth press against his own, and then another sharp bite cut into his bottom lip. Will groaned, but went lax against the ties around his wrists. The bite hadn't been hard enough to draw blood, this time.

"They never caught you," Will was babbling freely, utterly out of control of what he was saying. He felt his belt coming loose, and had there been light to see he wondered if he'd see the leather moving against itself without any hands in sight. The other hand was moving back up his chest, and he felt the scrape of a calloused finger slide over his nipple.

It was possible there was no ghost, more likely, Will thought wildly. He could be alone in the dark basement having the weirdest wet dream known to man. Maybe he had fallen asleep and nobody was dead. Maybe he was back up on Bloody Bend jerking himself off in his sleep.

Will felt teeth close around his nipple and he gasped, the sound reverberating off the stillness of the bedroom. The hand on his chest angled its fingers and nails scraped over his skin, Will tossed his head from side to side, unable to do much else. The mouth against his nipple gave a hard suck and when Will thrashed, a few more, then let up and Will felt another searing, claiming kiss over his mouth. It felt like he was inhaling the vapor off a cloud of dry ice, cold and almost chalky.

"I'm sorry Fred found your basement," Will whimpered, twisting his head and staring into the window desperately, but there wasn't enough light to see by and he could see only the dark forms of the trees outside and the gleaming moon overhead. "I'm sorry Price took your sword," Will jerked as the hand working his pants over moved over his hard cock. "Fuck," Will breathed, "I'm sorry, I-" the hand against his cock ground down and Will's words were cut off in a loud exhale. His felt as if they were on fire, his back was aching dully against the luxurious mattress.

The hand fished him out of his pants and the hand on his chest gave his nipple another savage twist that had Will gritting his teeth. Will's pants slithered down his legs and he heard them slump to the floor at the foot of the bed. Price's body would be there, he thought hysterically.

The hands left his body and Will felt them grab his ankles and pick them up over his head, bending him in half so completely he felt a deep ache in his hips. The hands let go of him and Will's legs dropped onto where shoulders would be on any other partner. Will's eyes were becoming adjusted to the dark, and no partner was there, just his skinny runner's thighs and sloping calves.

Will felt pressure against his hole and tried thrashing again, but his legs felt as if they had gone numb from cold, feeling heavy, numb, and unmoving. The finger pressed into him, but it didn't drag like a bare human finger in an un-lubed ass should have, but slid neatly inside. "Fuck," Will breathed and cold air gusted across his chest as if his partner were laughing against his skin. Will felt another finger join the first and worked hard to relax. Will thought about Fred downstairs on the table, ashen white and his abdomen dark with blood.

“Did you do this to Fred, too?” he asked, so quietly it was barely a squeak. The fingers inside him went still and then were pulled out. Will felt cold air near his lips, but turned his face away. Cold air froze his ear and he squeezed his eyes shut, not that he could see anything.

Will felt a single fingernail on his chest sliding down, then another at an angle from the first line. He’s writing, Will realized, and felt the letters N and O scratched into his chest.

“Oh,” he said to the ghost in the empty house, “okay.” If anyone had asked him how he felt right then, he would not have admitted that he mostly felt relieved.

The fingers at his ass slipped back into him and Will twitched hard, arms twisting but the ties holding him firmly. “You were a doctor, though,” Will panted, thinking of himself at the beginning of the night with all his friends alive and whole, standing in the dark office. Teeth caught his earlobe and worried it gently.

“A surgeon,” he continued, thinking of the metal table in the basement, the teeth tugged on his earlobe impatiently. The fingers in his ass twisted and scissored. “And,” he was struggling to think, his head was foggy and uncooperative, “and a psychiatrist?” Will’s mouth was being kissed then, an icy tongue sliding over his own. He felt pressure against his hole and realized belatedly that the fingers were gone.

Will felt the mattress shift, adjusting for weight that wasn’t there, and then the ghost of the serial killer was inside him. “Oh, god,” he moaned, pushing his hips back to get more of the person inside of him. If someone were to walk in right now, would then see his ass gaping open, his legs suspended in air, his lips bruising purple with nobody on top of him?

“You were a cannibal though,” he pronounced, words coming out in gasps and near-shouts as the invisible person thrust into him. “You ate them,” he was kissed again then, sloppy and open mouthed and as frigid as a glacier, “you were a good cook.” Teeth nipped at the point of his chin reprovingly, “a great cook,” Will amended and was rewarded with a softer kiss.

“Can I write a paper on you?” Will asked abruptly and his partner went momentarily still, “I think I’m starting to get it,” he confessed to the darkness, “it wasn’t butchery, it was art.” Abruptly his partner renewed, more frenzied than ever before, but Will never heard the slap of skin on skin although he certainly felt it. “Can I?” He asked, no longer sure if he was asking about the paper or something else entirely, “can I?”

Will felt a hand wrap around his cock and stroke him once, twice, and then he was coming with a howl that rattled off the windows. His partner thrust still faster a few more times and then went still. Will felt the pressure on top of him increase to an almost unbearable weight, and then abruptly it vanished as if it had never been there.

The ties at Will’s wrists slackened and fell away. Will sat up, rubbing his wrists and looking around the empty room. He noticed that the katana had been sheathed and restored to its place before the armor. He kicked himself over the bed and stood, stooping to retrieve his pants and very carefully not looking at Price on the ground. He tugged the jeans on and tried not to limp too much as he made for the door.

Will felt an arm catch him around the waist, icy lips against the nape of his neck. A hand slid up under his shirt and he felt the fingernails on his stomach spell out Y-E-S. "I'll need to come back," Will told the empty room, heart in his throat and having trouble getting the words out around his thudding pulse, "to look again."

Teeth closed over his neck and the hand on his stomach smooth down the plane of his body and over his jeans again. He felt himself turned on his feet and another press of lips against his mouth, and then the presence was utterly gone. Looking towards the windows, Will could see the first kiss of gray dawn light coming up over the trees. Distantly, beyond the dark clouds of leaves, he thought he could see red and blue police lights.

Will found the bedroom door innocently unlocked and trotted down the stairs, realizing abruptly that he was barefoot and continuing on anyway, but at a slower pace, avoiding the broken glass and tile of the once-luxurious home. In the kitchen, he found Bedelia and Alana sitting in a thick ring of salt. They were pale and drawn but both were wonderfully, amazingly alive.

"Will," Alana got to her feet and Bedelia struggled upright after her, leaning hard on the counter, "what happened?"

"I don't know," Will said, utterly truthfully, "I fell through the stairs and I only woke up now," he continued slightly less truthfully. "We looked for you," Alana said, "where," she choked her words, "where Fred is."

"Yeah, I think I fell into a crawl space or something," Will didn't like lying to her but how could he ever tell her, or anybody, the truth? Bedelia was watching him expressionlessly.

"Anyway," Will continued before she could speak, "I saw police lights outside, we should try to get out to them."

Bedelia slung an arm around his shoulder and another around Alana's and they hobbled away from Hannibal Lecter's house towards the tree line. Through the trees, they could just see Beverly running towards them, and three medics trotting after her. Before they had gone too far, Will couldn't stop himself from twisting around for one last look at the house. For the briefest of moments, he thought he saw a face in the upper window, watching them leave.

End Notes

You made it! What a ride, right? You can blame the hannibal cards against humanity crowd for this thing I have done.

If you liked it, or hated it, or are freaked out, or turned on, or freaked out that you're turned on, or just want to tell me about your day, please leave a comment or a kudo, or drop me a line over on tumblr.

Thank you again for reading!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!